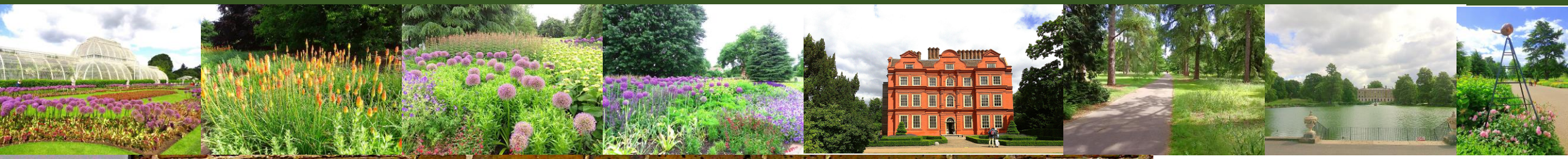
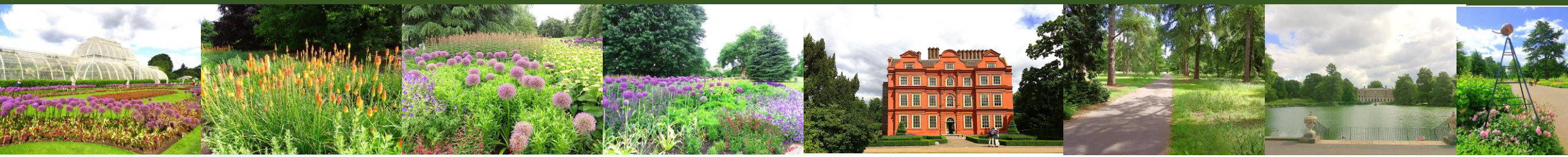
Kew Gardens



Royal Botanic Gardens
Kew
Stroll into summer
Discover 60,000 colourful reasons to visit the Great Broad Walk Borders
May – July 2017
kew.org/broadwalk
#kewbroadwalk
Friends of Kew go free

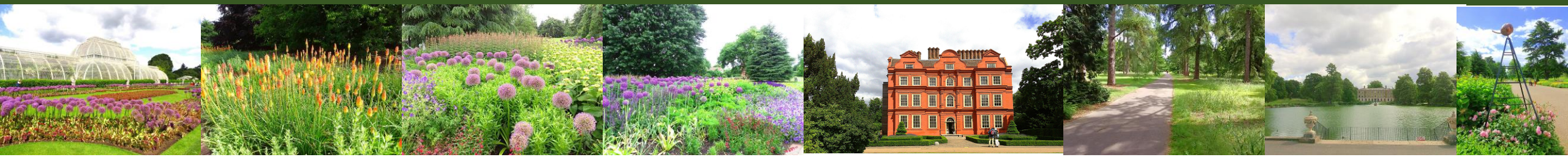
Kew Gardens



Kew Garden is worth a visit. Was there in 2017. At the same time you can look at Kew Palace. The facility is very impressive and has 1,100 employees and its own police station. The collections of exotic plants are the largest in the world. I took many photos and borrowed some from Wikipedia. Hope you like slideshow.

Anders Dernback
London 2017

Kew Gardens

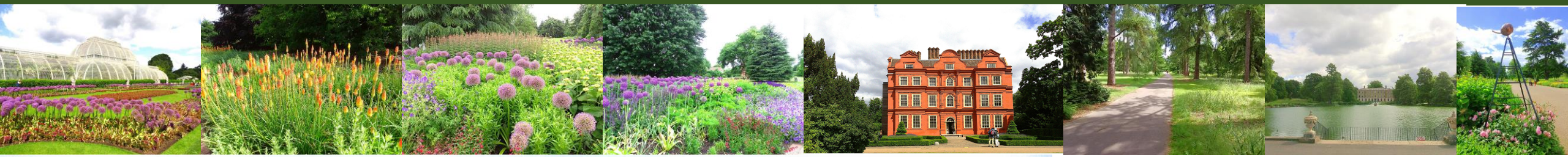


Kew Gardens is a botanic garden in southwest London that houses the "largest and most diverse botanical and mycological collections in the world". Founded in 1840, from the exotic garden at Kew Park, its living collections include some of the 27,000 taxa curated by Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, while the herbarium, one of the largest in the world, has over 8.5 million preserved plant and fungal specimens. The library contains more than 750,000 volumes, and the illustrations collection contains more than 175,000 prints and drawings of plants. It is one of London's top tourist attractions and is a World Heritage Site.

Kew Gardens, together with the botanic gardens at Wakehurst in Sussex, are managed by the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, an internationally important botanical research and education institution that employs over 1,100 staff and is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

The botanic gardens at Kew formally started in 1759, although they can be traced back to the exotic garden at Kew Park, formed by Henry, Lord Capell of Tewkesbury. The site now consists of 132 hectares (330 acres) of gardens and botanical glasshouses, four Grade I listed buildings, and 36 Grade II listed structures, all set in an internationally significant landscape. Kew Gardens is listed Grade I on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens.

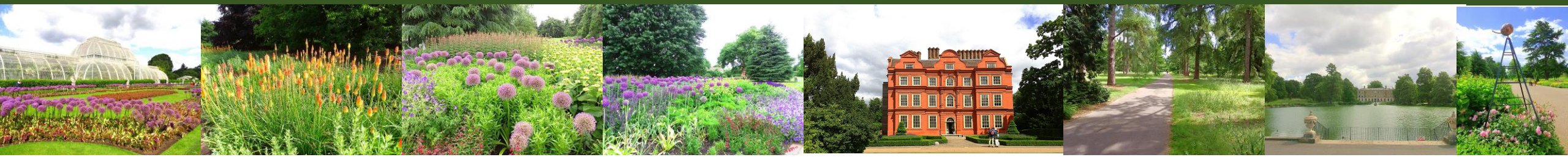
Kew Gardens



Kew consists mostly of the gardens themselves and a small surrounding community. Royal residences in the area which would later influence the layout and construction of the gardens began in 1299 when Edward I moved his court to a manor house in neighbouring Richmond (then called Sheen). That manor house was later abandoned.

Henry VII built Sheen Palace in 1501, which, under the name Richmond Palace, became a permanent royal residence for Henry VII.

Kew Gardens

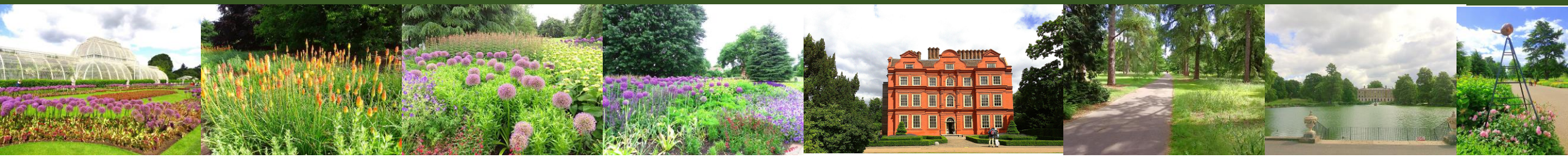


Around the start of the 16th century courtiers attending Richmond Palace settled in Kew and built large houses. Early royal residences at Kew included Mary Tudor's house, which was in existence by 1522 when a driveway was built to connect it to the palace at Richmond. Around 1600, the land that would become the gardens was known as Kew Field, a large field strip farmed by one of the new private estates.

The exotic garden at Kew Park, formed by Henry Capell, 1st Baron Capell of Tewkesbury, was enlarged and extended by Augusta, Dowager Princess of Wales, the widow of Frederick, Prince of Wales. The origins of Kew Gardens can be traced to the merging of the royal estates of Richmond and Kew in 1772. William Chambers built several garden structures, including the lofty Great Pagoda built in 1761 which still remains. George III enriched the gardens, aided by William Aiton and Sir Joseph Banks. The old Kew Park (by then renamed the White House), was demolished in 1802. The "Dutch House" adjoining was purchased by George III in 1781 as a nursery for the royal children. It is a plain brick structure now known as Kew Palace.

The Epicure's Almanack reports an anecdote of the garden wall as of 1815: "In going up Dreary Lane that leads to Richmond you pass along the east boundary wall of Kew Gardens, extending more than a mile in length.

Kew Gardens



This dead wall used to have a most teasing and tedious effect on the eye of a pedestrian; but a poor mendicant crippled seaman, some years ago, enlivened it by drawing on it, in chalk, every man of war in the British navy. He returns annually to the spot to refit his ships, and raises considerable supplies for his own victualling board from the gratuities of the charitable, who pass to and from Richmond."

Some early plants came from the walled garden established by William Coys at Stubbers in North Ockendon. The collections grew somewhat haphazardly until the appointment of the first collector, Francis Masson, in 1771. Capability Brown, who became England's most renowned landscape architect, applied for the position of master gardener at Kew, and was rejected.

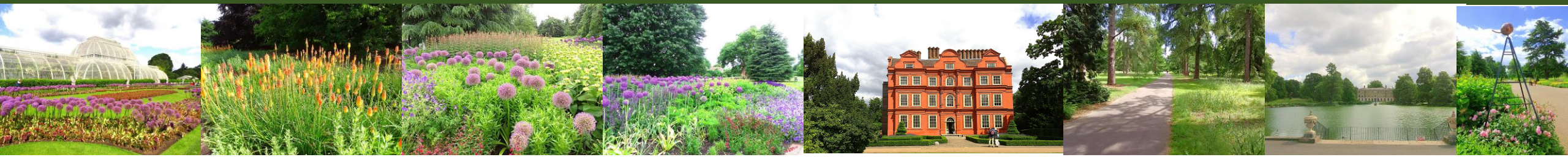
In 1840, the gardens were adopted as a national botanical garden, in large part due to the efforts of the Royal Horticultural Society and its president William Cavendish. Under Kew's director, William Hooker, the gardens were increased to 30 hectares (75 acres) and the pleasure grounds, or arboretum, extended to 109 hectares (270 acres), and later to its present size of 121 hectares (300 acres). The first curator was John Smith.

Kew Gardens

The Palm House was built by architect Decimus Burton and iron-maker Richard Turner between 1844 and 1848, and was the first large-scale structural use of wrought iron. It is considered "the world's most important surviving Victorian glass and iron structure". The structure's panes of glass are all hand-blown. The Temperate House, which is twice as large as the Palm House, followed later in the 19th century. It is now the largest Victorian glasshouse in existence. Kew was the location of the successful effort in the 19th century to propagate rubber trees for cultivation outside South America.

In February 1913, the Tea House was burned down by suffragettes Olive Wharry and Lilian Lenton during a series of arson attacks in London.

Kew Gardens



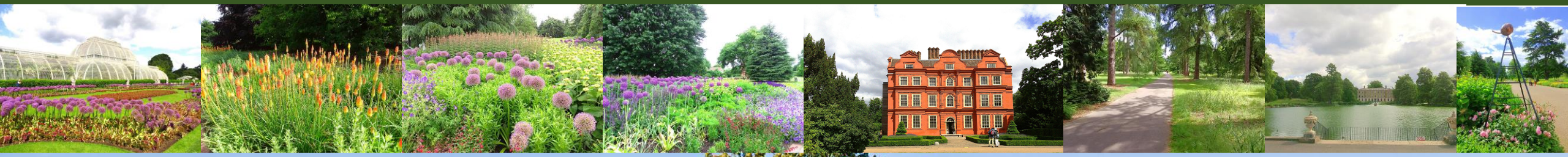
Kew Gardens lost hundreds of trees in the Great Storm of 1987.

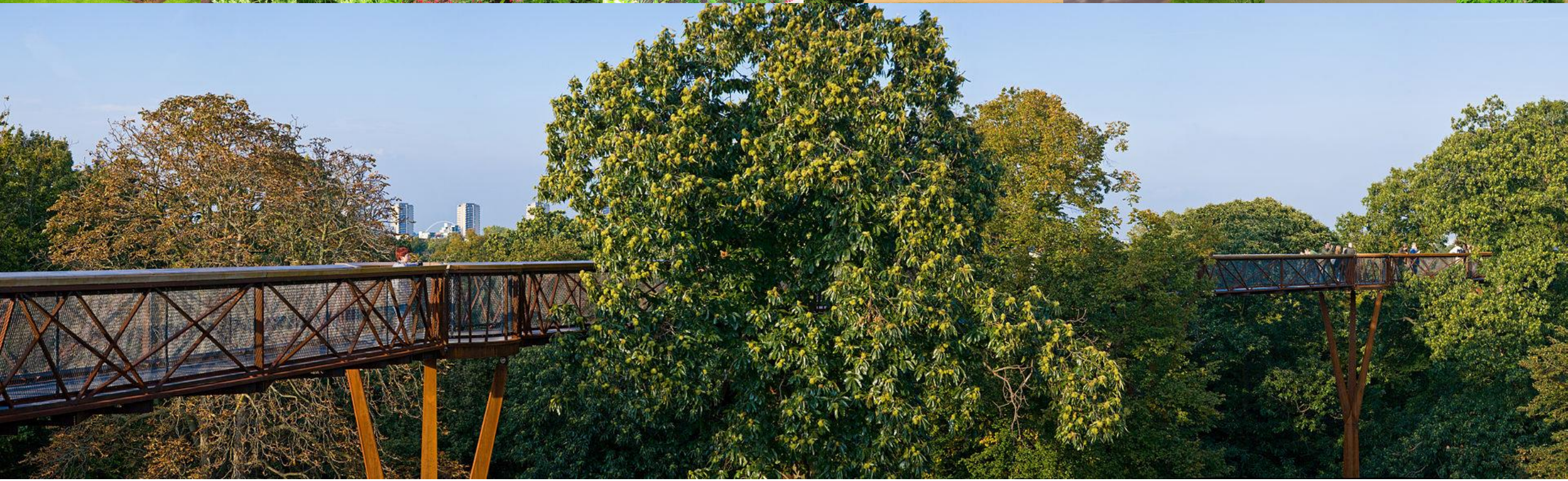
From 1959 to 2007, Kew Gardens had the tallest flagpole in Britain. Made from a single Douglas-fir from Canada, it was given to mark both the centenary of the Canadian province of British Columbia and the bicentenary of Kew Gardens. The flagpole was removed after damage by weather and woodpeckers made it a danger.

In July 2003, UNESCO put the gardens on its list of World Heritage Sites. A five-year, £41 million, revamp of the Temperate House was completed in May 2018. Five trees survive from the establishment of the botanical gardens in 1762. Together they are known as the 'Five Lions' and consist of: a ginkgo (Ginkgo biloba), a pagoda tree, or scholar tree (Styphnolobium japonicum), an oriental plane (Platanus orientalis), a black locust, or false acacia (Robinia pseudoacacia), and a Caucasian elm or zelkova (Zelkova carpinifolia).

Treetop walkway

Kew Gardens

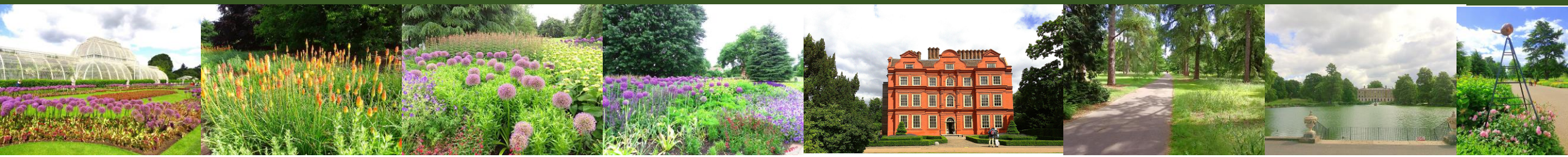




A panoramic view of the treetop walkway. It stands 18 metres (59 ft) above ground.

A canopy walkway, which opened in 2008, takes visitors on a 200 metres (660 ft) walk 18 metres (59 ft) above the ground, in the tree canopy of a woodland glade.

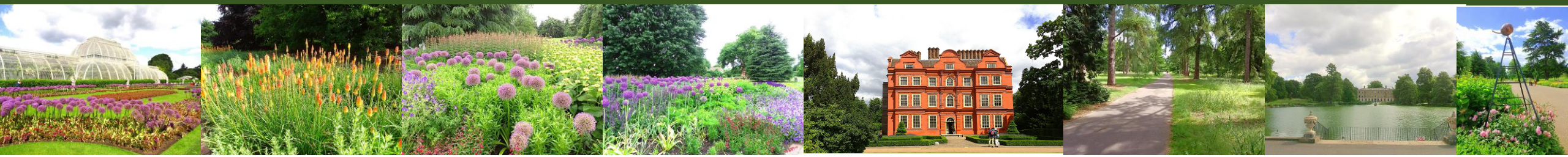
Kew Gardens



Visitors can ascend and descend by stairs and by a lift. The walkway floor is perforated metal and flexes under foot; the entire structure sways in the wind. It was designed by David Marks.
The accompanying photograph shows a section of the walkway, including the steel supports, which were designed to rust to a tree-like appearance to help the walkway fit in visually with its surroundings. A short video detailing the construction of the walkway is available online.

The Lake Crossing bridge, made of granite and bronze, opened in May 2006. Designed by Buro Happold and John Pawson, it crosses the lake and was previously named in honour of Dr Mortimer and Theresa Sackler. The minimalist-styled bridge is designed as a sweeping double curve of black granite. The sides of the bridge are formed of bronze posts that give the impression, from certain angles, of forming a solid wall while, from others, and to those on the bridge, they are clearly individual entities that allow a view of the water beyond.

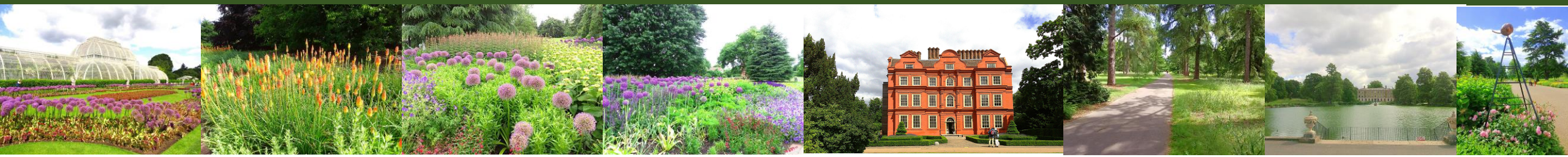
Kew Gardens



The bridge forms part of a path designed to encourage visitors to visit more of the gardens than had hitherto been popular and connects the two art galleries, via the Temperate and Evolution Houses and the woodland glade, to the Minka House and the Bamboo Garden.The crossing won a special award from the Royal Institute of British Architects in 2008.

Royal Institute of British Architects

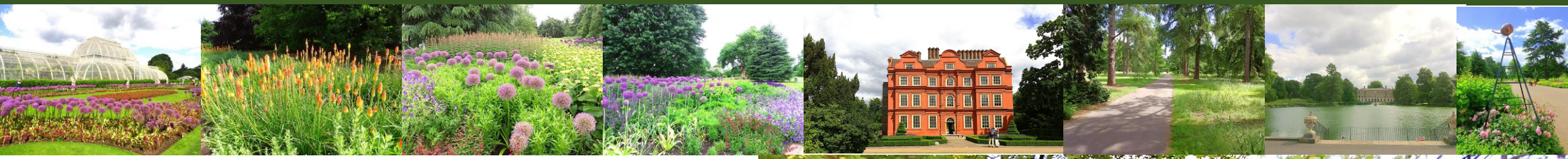
Kew Gardens



The Hive opened in 2016 and is a multi-sensory experience designed to highlight the extraordinary life of bees. It stands 17 metres (56 ft) tall and is set in a wildflower meadow. The Hive was designed by English artist Wolfgang Buttress. The Hive has been created using thousands of aluminium pieces that are presented in the shape of a honeycomb. It was initially installed as a temporary exhibition, but was given a permanent home at Kew Gardens due to its popularity.

Wolfgang Buttress (born 1965) is an English artist. He creates multi-sensory artworks that draw inspiration from our evolving relationship with the natural world.

Kew Gardens



Kew Explorer is a service that takes a circular route around the gardens, provided by two 72-seater road trains that are fuelled by Calor Gas to minimize pollution. A commentary is provided by the driver and there are several stops. A map of the gardens is available on the Kew Gardens website.

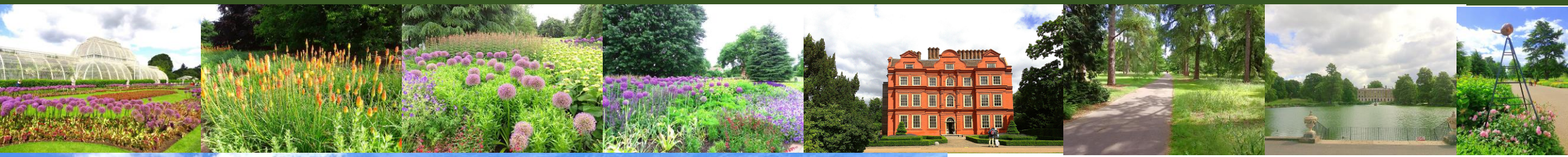
Kew has one of the largest compost heaps in Europe, made from green and woody waste from the gardens and the manure from the stables of the Household Cavalry. The compost is mainly used in the gardens, but on occasion has been auctioned as part of a fundraising event for the gardens.

Kew Gardens

The compost heap is in an area of the gardens not accessible to the public but a viewing platform, made of wood which had been illegally traded but seized by Customs officers in HMRC, has been erected to allow visitors to observe the heap as it goes through its cycle.

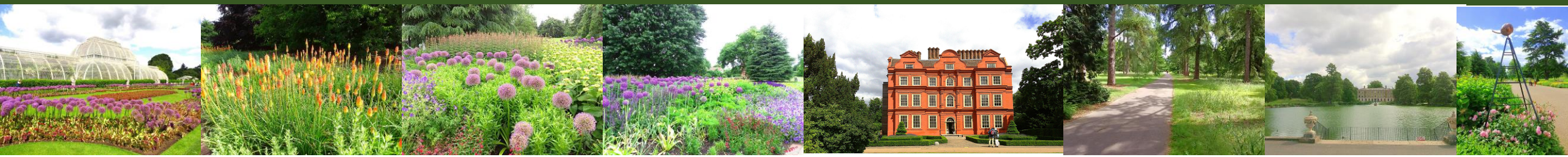
Alpine House

Kew Gardens



In March 2006, the Davies Alpine House opened, the third version of an alpine house since 1887. Although only 16 metres (52 ft) long the apex of the roof arch extends to a height of 10 metres (33 ft) in order to allow the natural airflow of a building of this shape to aid in the all-important ventilation required for the type of plants to be housed. The new house features a set of automatically operated blinds that prevent it from overheating when the sun is too hot for the plants together with a system that blows a continuous stream of cool air over the plants.

Kew Gardens



The main design aim of the house is to allow maximum light transmission. To this end the glass is of a special low iron type that allows 90 per cent of the ultraviolet light in sunlight to pass. It is attached by high tension steel cables so that no light is obstructed by traditional glazing bars.

To conserve energy the cooling air is not refrigerated but is cooled by being passed through a labyrinth of pipes buried under the house at a depth where the temperature remains suitable all year round. The house is designed so that the maximum temperature should not exceed 20 °C (68 °F).

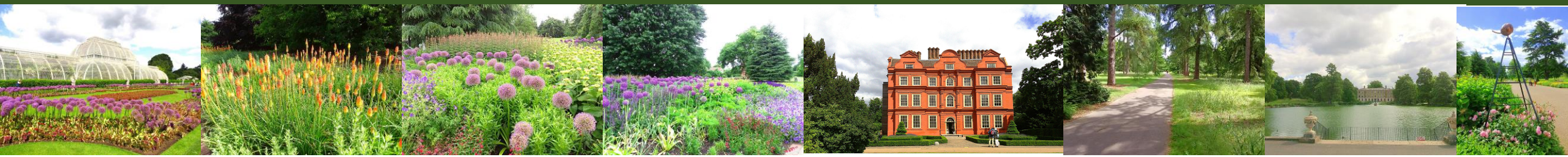
Kew's collection of alpine plants (defined as those that grow above the tree line in their locale – ground level at the poles rising to over 2,000 metres (6,562 feet)), extends to over 7000. As the Alpine House can only house around 200 at a time the ones on show are regularly rotated.

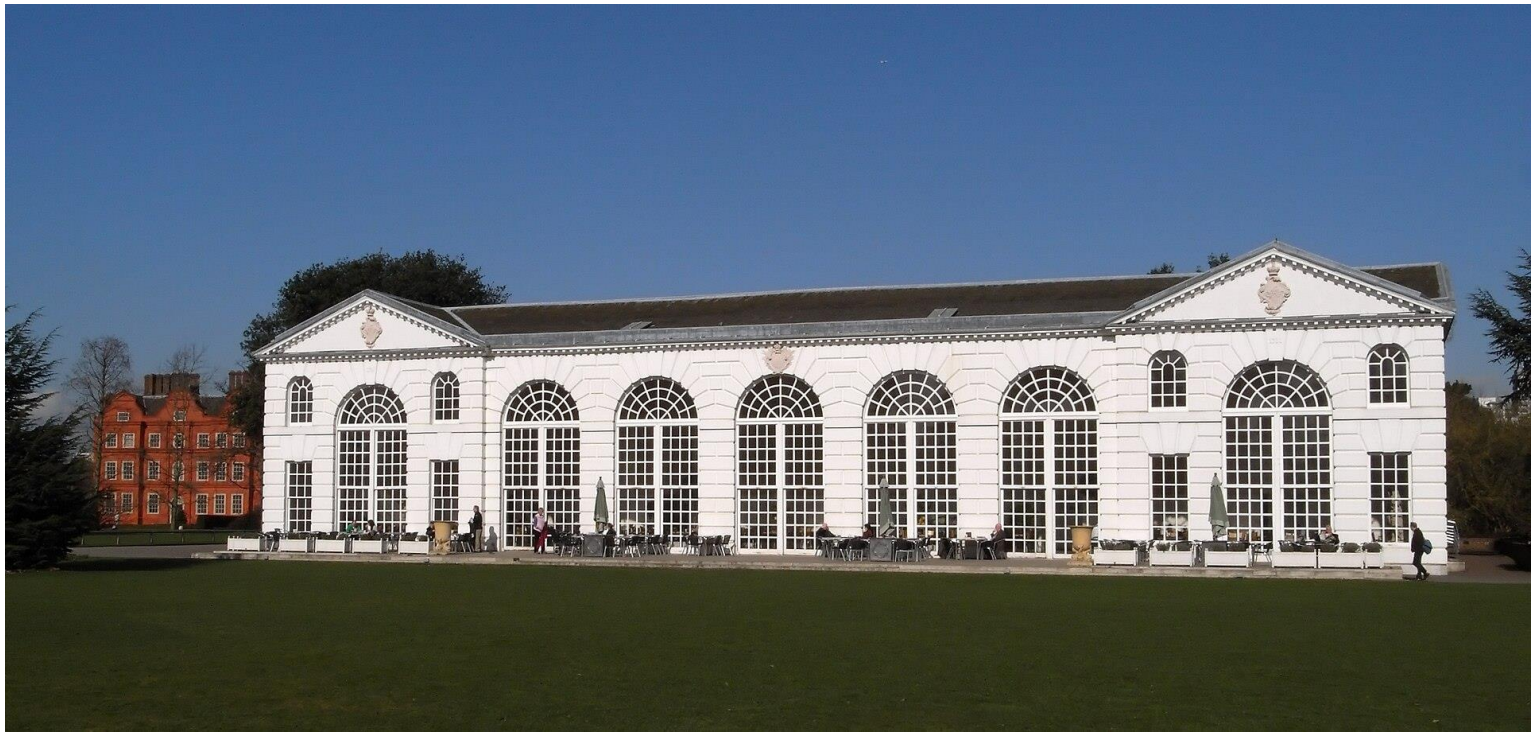
Nash Conservatory

Kew Gardens

Originally designed for Buckingham Palace, this was moved to Kew in 1836 by King William IV. The building was formerly known as the Aroid House No. 1 and was used to display species of Araceae, the building was listed Grade II* in 1950. With an abundance of natural light, the building is now used for various exhibitions, weddings, and private events. It is also now used to exhibit the winners of the photography competition.

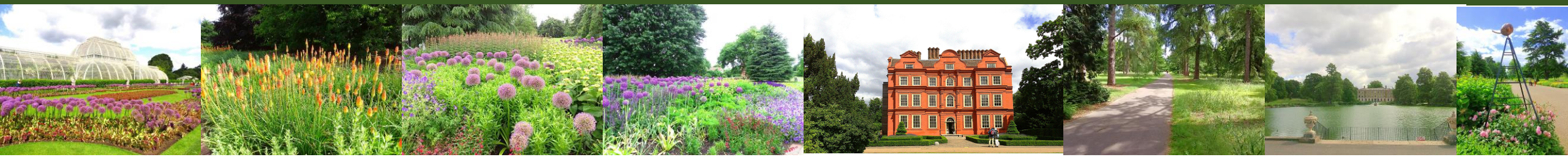
Kew Gardens





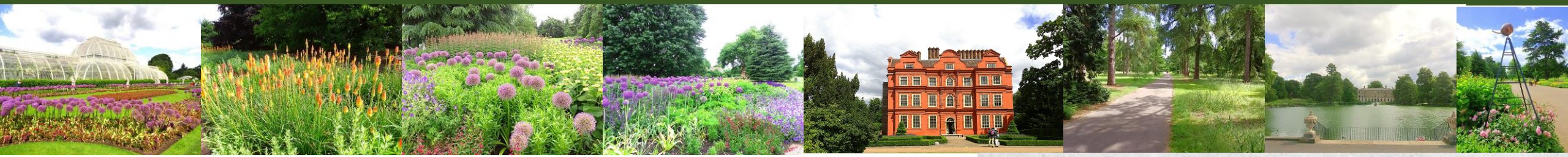
The Orangery was designed by Sir William Chambers, and was completed in 1761. It measures 28 by 10 metres (92 by 33 ft). It was found to be too dark for its intended purpose of growing citrus plants and they were moved out in 1841. After many changes of use, it is currently used as a restaurant.

Kew Gardens



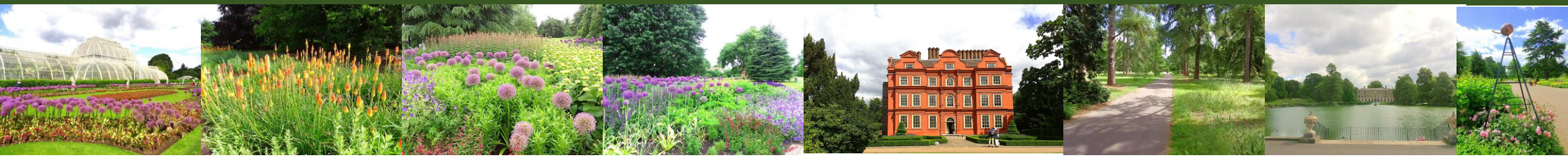
The Palm House (1844–1848) was the result of cooperation between architect Decimus Burton and iron founder Richard Turner, and continues upon the glass house design principles developed by John Claudius Loudon and Joseph Paxton. A space frame of wrought iron arches, held together by horizontal tubular structures containing long prestressed cables, supports glass panes which were originally tinted green with copper oxide to reduce the significant heating effect.

Kew Gardens



Decimus Burton (30 September 1800 – 14 December 1881) was one of the foremost English architects and landscapers of the 19th century. He was the foremost Victorian architect in the Roman revival, Greek revival, Georgian neoclassical and Regency styles. He was a founding fellow and vice-president of the Royal Institute of British Architects, and from 1840 architect to the Royal Botanic Society, and an early member of the Athenaeum Club, London, whose clubhouse he designed and which the company of his father, James Burton, the pre-eminent Georgian London property developer, built.

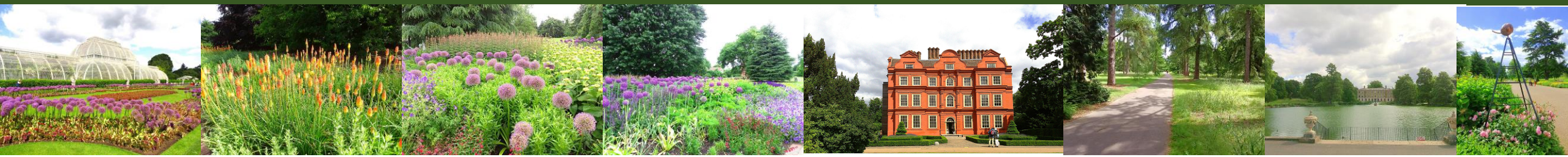
Kew Gardens



The 19 metres (62 ft) high central nave is surrounded by a walkway at 9 metres (30 ft) height, allowing visitors a closer look upon the palm tree crowns. In front of the Palm House on the east side are the Queen's Beasts, ten statues of animals bearing shields. They are Portland stone replicas of originals done by James Woodford and were placed here in 1958.

The Palm House was originally heated by two coal-fired boilers, with a 107 feet (33 m) chimney, the "Shaft of the Great Palm-Stove", now known as the Campanile, near the Victoria Gate. Coal was brought in by a light railway, running in a tunnel, using human-propelled wagons. The tunnel acted as a flue between the boilers and the chimney, but the distance proved too great for efficient working, and so two small chimneys were added to the Palm House. In 1950 the railway was electrified. The tunnel is now used to carry piped hot water to the Palm House, from oil-fired boilers located near the original chimney, which is extant, and is Grade II listed.

Kew Gardens



The Queen's Beasts are ten heraldic statues representing the genealogy of Queen Elizabeth II, depicted as the Royal supporters of England. They stood in front of the temporary western annexe to Westminster Abbey for the Queen's coronation in 1953. Each of the Queen's Beasts consists of a heraldic beast supporting a shield bearing a badge or arms of a family associated with the ancestry of Queen Elizabeth II. They were commissioned by the British Ministry of Works from the sculptor James Woodford, who was paid the sum of £2,750 for the work. They were uncoloured except for their shields at the coronation. They are now on display in the Canadian Museum of History in Gatineau, Quebec.

Kew Gardens

Princess of Wales Conservatory

Kew's third major conservatory, the Princess of Wales Conservatory, designed by architect Gordon Wilson, was opened in 1987 by Diana, Princess of Wales in commemoration of her predecessor Augusta's associations with Kew

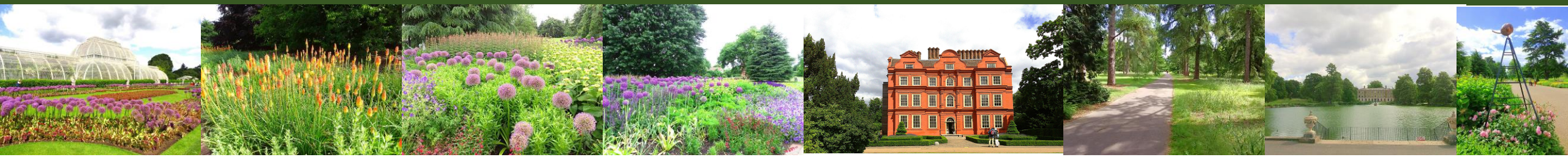
Kew Gardens

It replaced 26 smaller buildings. In 1989 the conservatory received the Europa Nostra award for conservation. The conservatory houses ten computer-controlled micro-climatic zones, with the bulk of the greenhouse volume composed of Dry Tropics and Wet Tropics plants. Significant numbers of orchids, water lilies, cacti, lithops, carnivorous plants and bromeliads are housed in the various zones. The cactus collection also extends outside the conservatory where some hardier species can be found.

The conservatory has an area of 4,499 square metres (48,430 sq ft; 0.4499 ha; 1.112 acres). As it is designed to minimize the amount of energy taken to run it, the cooler zones are grouped around the outside and the more tropical zones are in the central area where heat is conserved. The glass roof extends down to the ground, giving the conservatory a distinctive appearance and helping to maximize the use of the sun's energy.

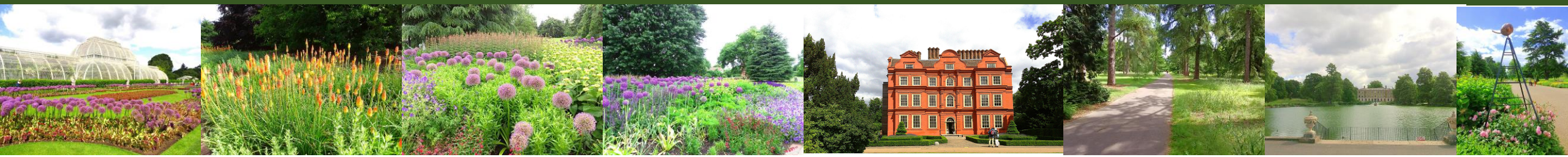
During the construction of the conservatory a time capsule was buried. It contains the seeds of basic crops and endangered plant species and key publications on conservation.

Kew Gardens



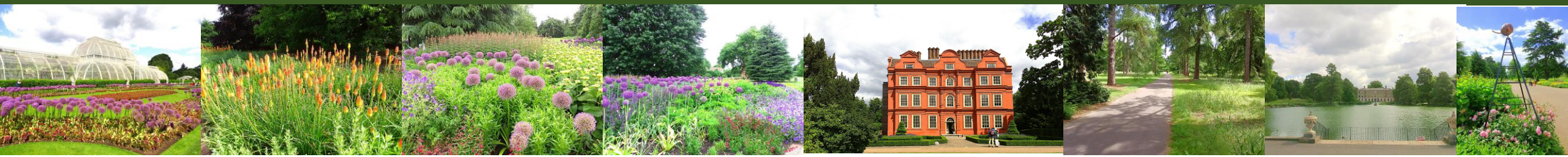
The Temperate House, re-opened in May 2018 after being closed for restoration, is a greenhouse that has twice the floor area of the Palm House and is the world's largest surviving Victorian glass structure. It contains plants and trees from all the temperate regions of the world, some of which are extremely rare. It was commissioned in 1859 and designed by architect Decimus Burton and iron founder Richard Turner. Covering 4880 square metres, it rises to a height of 19 metres (62 ft). Intended to accommodate Kew's expanding collection of hardy and temperate plants, it took 40 years to construct, during which time costs soared. The building was closed for restoration 1980–82. The building was restored during 2014–15 by Donald Insall Associates, based on their conservation management plan.

Kew Gardens



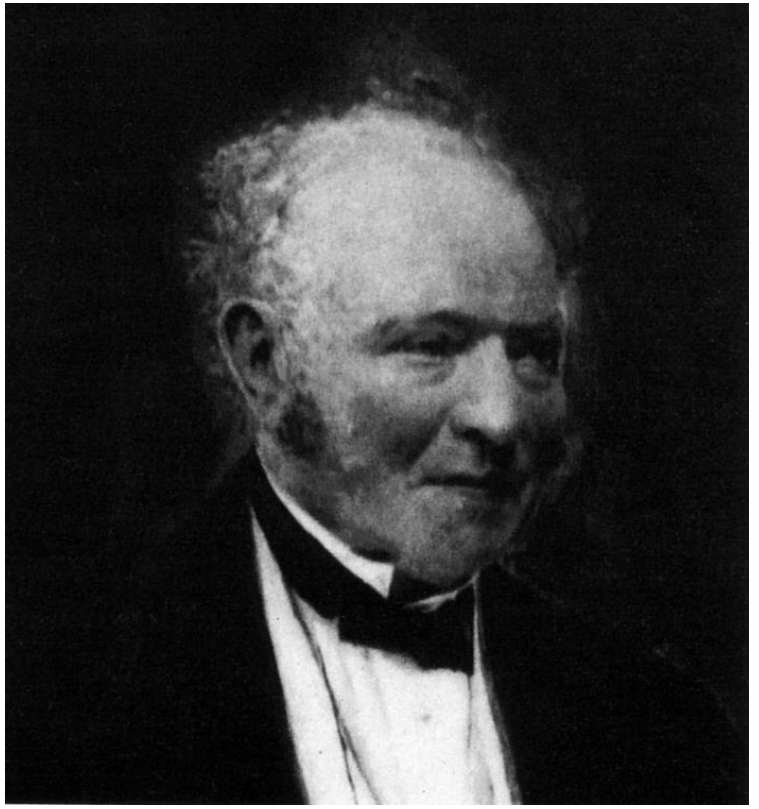
The Waterlily House is the hottest and most humid of the houses at Kew and contains a large pond with varieties of water lily, surrounded by a display of economically important heat-loving plants. It closes during the winter months. It was built to house Victoria amazonica, the largest known species of the water lily family Nymphaeaceae at the time.

Kew Gardens



This plant was originally transported to Kew in vials of clean water and arrived in February 1849, after several prior attempts to transport seeds and roots had failed. Although various other members of Nymphaeaceae grew well, the house did not suit the Victoria, purportedly because of a poor ventilation system, and this specimen was moved to another, smaller, house (Victoria amazonica House No. 10).

The ironwork for the Waterlily House project was provided by Richard Turner and the initial construction was completed in 1852. The heat for the house was initially obtained by running a flue from the nearby Palm House but it was later equipped with its own boiler.



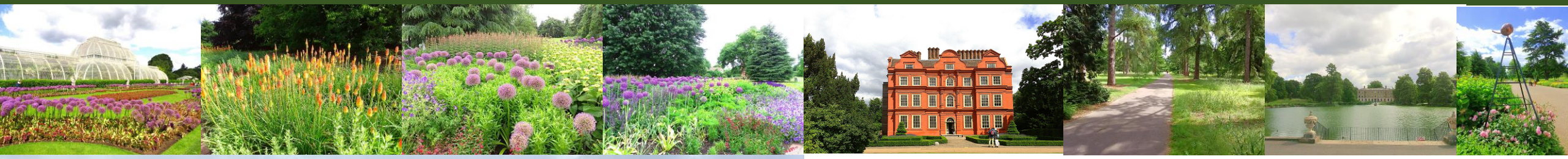
Richard Turner

Kew Gardens

Evolution House

Formerly known as the Australian House, the house was a gift from the Australian Government. It was designed by S L Rothwell (Ministry of Works) with consultant engineer J E Temple and was constructed by the Crittall Manufacturing Company Ltd. It opened in 1952. From 1995 it was known as the Evolution House. The building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 for its special architectural or historic interest.

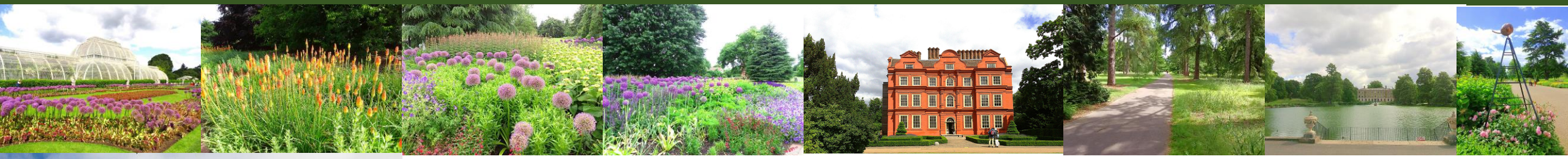
Kew Gardens



The Bonsai House was formerly known as the Alpine House No. 24 prior to the construction of the Davies Alpine House. Kew's bonsai collection has around sixty specimens, displayed seasonally in the House, including a 100 year-old Japanese maple and a 200 year-old temple maple.

Great Pagoda

Kew Gardens

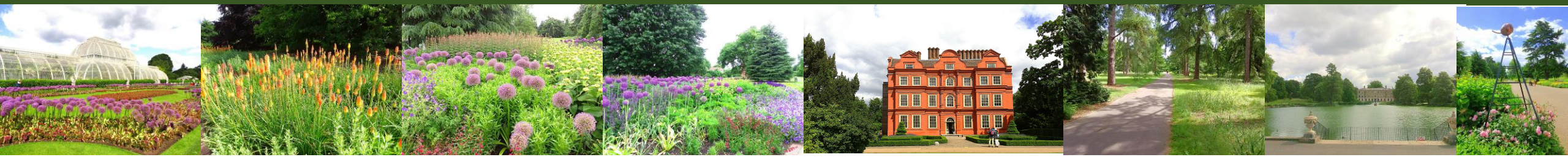


In the southeast corner of Kew Gardens stands the Great Pagoda (by Sir William Chambers), erected in 1762, from a design in imitation of the Chinese Ta. The lowest of the ten octagonal storeys is 15 m (49 ft) in diameter. From the base to the highest point is 50 m (164 ft).

Each storey finishes with a projecting roof, after the Chinese manner, originally covered with ceramic tiles and adorned with large dragons; a tale is still propagated that they were made of gold and were reputedly sold by George IV to settle his debts. In fact the dragons were made of wood painted gold, and simply rotted away with the ravages of time. The walls of the building are composed of brick. The staircase, 253 steps, is in the center of the building. During the Second World War holes were cut in each floor to allow for drop-testing of model bombs.
The Pagoda was closed to the public for many years but was reopened for the summer months of 2006. It has been renovated in a major restoration project and reopened under the aegis of Historic Royal Palaces in 2018. 80 dragons have been remade and now sit on each storey of the building.

Japanese Gateway (Chokushi-Mon)

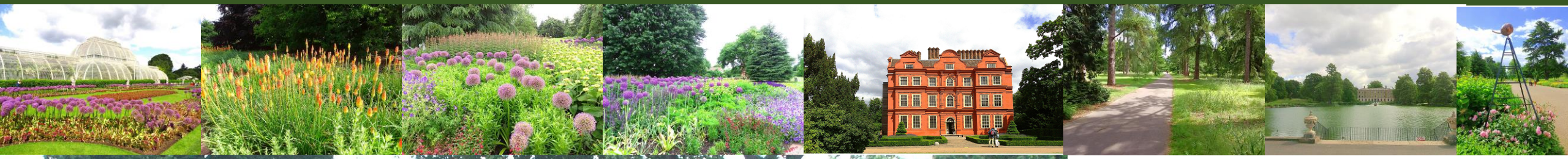
Kew Gardens



Built for the Japan-British Exhibition (1910) and moved to Kew in 1911, the Chokushi-Mon ("Imperial Envoy's Gateway") is a four-fifths scale replica of the karamon (gateway) of the Nishi Hongan-ji temple in Kyoto. It lies about 140 m north of the Pagoda and is surrounded by a reconstruction of a traditional Japanese garden.

Minka House

Kew Gardens

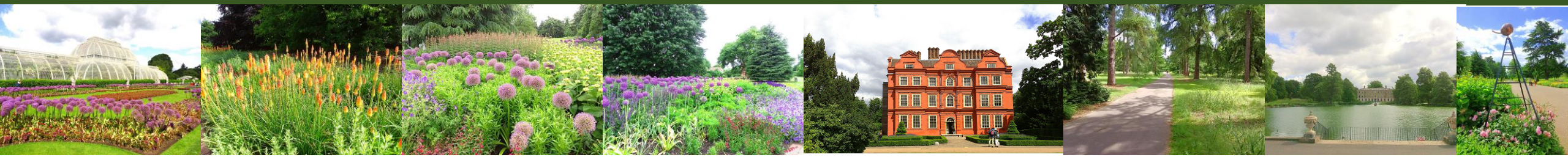


Following the Japan 2001 festival, Kew acquired a Japanese wooden house called a minka. It was originally erected in around 1900 in a suburb of Okazaki and is now located within the bamboo collection in the west-central part of Kew Gardens. Japanese craftsmen reassembled the framework and British builders who had worked on the Globe Theatre added the mud wall panels.

Kew Gardens

Queen Charlotte's Cottage

Kew Gardens



The cottage orné dates to a movement of rustic stylised cottages of the late 18th and early 19th-centuries: such a cottage must be in a deliberately rustic style, and typically it features a well-shaped thatch roof with ornate timberwork. A single storey is also typical, although a second storey is not unknown.

Queen Charlotte's Cottage dates from 1772, and is one of the earliest examples of a cottage orné. The design is timber-framed with brick infill, which has been attributed to the North German vernacular which the Queen will have recalled from her childhood. The roof is thatched, and the simple doors are made of rough planks with wooden latches. The windows, which are large for a cottage, are recycled 17th-century frames with leaded panes. Inside, the cottage is more elaborate than is usual for a cottage orné. There are two main rooms: the Print Room downstairs and the Picnic Room above it, linked by a cantilevered staircase. The Picnic Room was painted by Princess Elizabeth (who had been taught botanical drawing by Franz Bauer) in the early 19th-century to represent the interior of a bower. The earliest description of the cottage is from 1774, in which the design is attributed to Charlotte herself. As the Queen paid for the work herself, the records were in her Privy Purse papers, which have not been traced. There is some evidence that Sir William Chambers (who designed the nearby Great Pagoda for Princess Augusta in 1762 and a number of other features at Kew) turned the Queen's ideas into architect's plans.

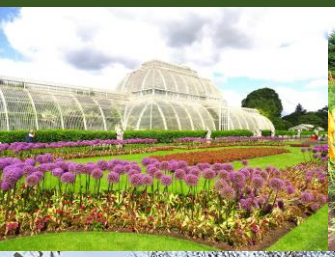
King William's Temple

Kew Gardens

A double porticoed Doric temple in stone with a series of cast-iron panels set in the inside walls commemorating British military victories from Minden (1759) to Waterloo (1815). It was built in 1837 by Sir Jeffery Wyatville, and originally called The Pantheon. Named after King William IV (1830–37). It is Grade II listed.

Temple of Aeolus

Kew Gardens



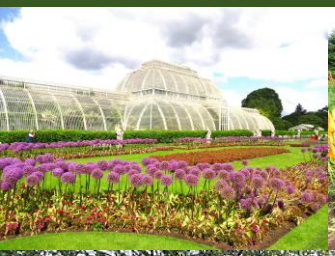
A domed rotunda with eight Tuscan columns. The original temple was built in 1763 by Sir William Chambers. The present temple is an 1845 replacement by Decimus Burton. It is Grade II listed. The temple was one of three originally named to honour British victories in the Seven Years' War, in this case the name commemorates HMS Aeolus.

Kew Gardens

A small Greek temple portico with two Ionic columns and two outer Ionic pillars; it is pedimented with a cornice and key pattern frieze. It was built in 1758 by Sir William Chambers. It is Grade II listed. Similar to the temple of Aeolus and Bellona, she was later named to commemorate the warship HMS Arethusa.

Temple of Bellona

Kew Gardens



A whitewashed stucco temple. The facade has a portico of two pairs of Doric columns with a metope frieze pediment and an oval dome behind. Inside is a room with an oval domed center. On the walls garlands and medallions with the names and numbers of British and Hanovarian units connected with the Seven Years' War. It was built in 1760 by Sir William Chambers and eventually named after HMS Bellona. It is Grade II listed.

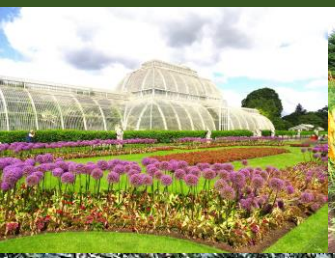
The Ruined Arch

Kew Gardens

A brick arch with rustication in stucco. A triple-arched opening with oculi above lower side arches, it has a stone band course and a fragmented blocked cornice and brick offering, and a corniced doorway. It was built in 1759–60 by Sir William Chambers. It is Grade II listed.

Ice House

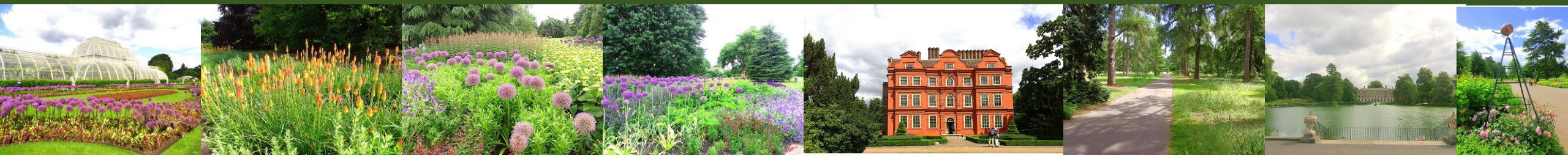
Kew Gardens



The Ice House is believed to be early 18th-century, it has a brick dome with an access arch and barrel-vaulted passageway, covered by a mound of earth. It is Grade II listed

Kew Palace

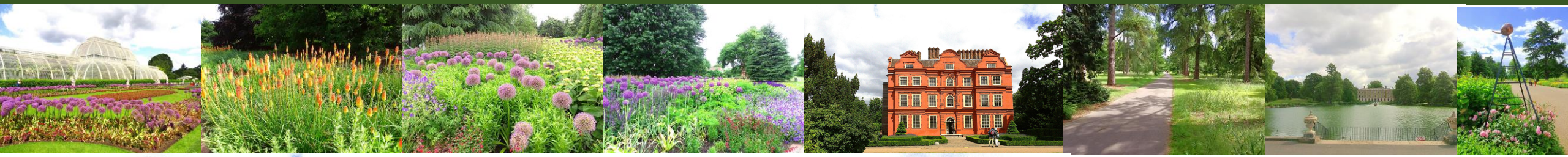
Kew Gardens



Kew Palace is the smallest of the British royal palaces. It was built by Samuel Fortrey, a Dutch merchant in around 1631. It was later purchased by George III. The construction method is known as Flemish bond and involves laying the bricks with long and short sides alternating. This and the gabled front give the construction a Dutch appearance.

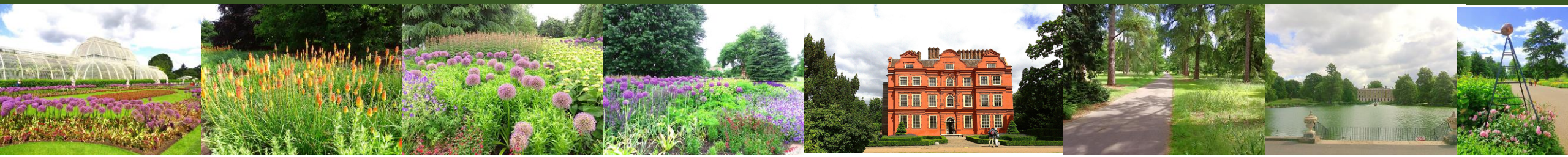
To the rear of the building is the "Queen's Garden" which includes a collection of plants believed to have medicinal qualities. Only plants that were extant in England by the 17th century are grown in the garden.

Kew Gardens



The building underwent significant restoration, with leading conservation architects Donald Insall Associates, before being reopened to the public in 2006. It is administered separately from Kew Gardens, by Historic Royal Palaces.

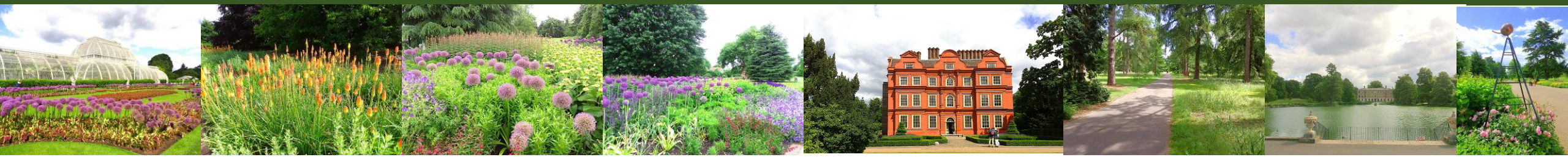
Kew Gardens



In front of the palace is a sundial, which was given to Kew Gardens in 1959 to commemorate a royal visit. It was sculpted by Martin Holden and is a replica of one by Thomas Tompion, a celebrated 17th-century clockmaker, which had been sited near the surviving palace building since 1832 to mark the site of James Bradley's observations leading to his discovery of the aberration of light.

Beneath the Dutch House is the undercroft of a 16th-century building. This was on land owned by John Dudley and restored to his son Robert Dudley, 1st Earl of Leicester, childhood friend and court favourite of Elizabeth I, in 1558. It belonged to a west-facing brick building and may be identifiable with a house in Kew in which Robert Dudley entertained Elizabeth in 1563 – one of Elizabeth's main palaces at that time was the nearby Richmond Palace.

Kew Gardens



In 1619, the building above the undercroft was leased by Samuel Fortrey, who finally demolished all but the undercroft in 1631, erecting a new larger south-facing manor house in its place. The father of the author Samuel Fortrey, Samuel Fortrey senior was a merchant descended from a family originating near Lille, though later confusion over his ancestry led to the building becoming known as the Dutch House. That name also originated in the house's supposedly Dutch style of architecture, known as Artisan Mannerist and dominated by Dutch gables this style was actually more prevalent in London, East Anglia and East Kent than the Netherlands at the time. In 1697, Fortrey's descendants leased the building to Sir Richard Levett, a powerful merchant and the former Lord Mayor of London, who later left it to his daughter Mary.

Kew Gardens

Kew House

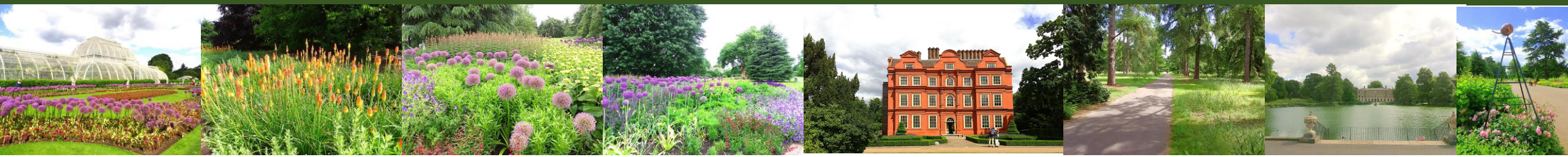
Facing the 1631 house was another mansion, possibly of Tudor origin. It was often visited by the diarist John Evelyn and passed from Richard Bennett to his daughter Dorothy, wife of Henry Capel. Dorothy and Henry remained childless and so the house then passed to Dorothy's great-niece Elizabeth, wife of the Prince of Wales's secretary, Samuel Molyneux, and then to Molyneux's physician Nathaniel St André. This mansion, which was eventually pulled down in 1802, was also the site of James Bradley's observations in 1725 that led to his discovery of the aberration of light. William IV marked the site of the observations with a Thomas Tompion sundial in 1832, transferred from Hampton Court Palace to a plinth to the Dutch House's south-east. This was replaced with a replica in 1959 and moved to its new and different site directly to the south of the Dutch House.

George II's children

Kew Gardens

In 1727, Queen Caroline and George II came to the British throne. By that time they had six children living with them at their summer residence at Richmond Lodge. In 1728 Caroline leased the Dutch House to house her three eldest daughters Anne, Amelia and Caroline and another nearby building which became known as the 'Queen's House', though the intended occupant may have been her son William rather than the queen herself. This left Caroline's two youngest daughters Mary and Louise with her at Richmond Lodge. George and Caroline had come to Britain in 1714 when George's father took the throne as George I, leaving their eldest son Frederick behind in Hanover aged 7. When George II succeeded his father, Frederick became Prince of Wales and so was finally allowed to come to Britain. He arrived in December 1728, less than a year after his mother had taken the lease on the Dutch House. Now aged 21, knowing little of his sisters and possibly wishing for a family rapprochement, he soon took a long lease on the old Capel House at Kew and in 1731 also purchased its contents from St André.

Kew Gardens



Frederick then set about remodeling it with assistance from William Kent – it then became known as the White House due to its plastered exterior. Frederick also added a large new separate kitchen block, open to the public since 2012 as 'the Royal Kitchens'. There was also a stable block of an unknown date serving the White House, located a short distance to its north-east and demolished in the late 19th century.

An oil-on-canvas musical portrait from 1733 shows Frederick and his three eldest sisters playing mandolin, harpsichord and cello. It was painted by his librarian and art agent Philip Mercier and exists in three variants, two of which show the Dutch House in the background (National Portrait Gallery and National Trust the third variant in the Royal Collection shows the same group in an interior, possibly Kensington Palace. Anne married and left England the year after the portrait was painted and Caroline left Kew in 1743, retiring to St James's Palace, where she died in 1757.

Along with Cliveden, the White House became Frederick's main family country home, where he entertained poets such as James Thomson (author of The Seasons) and Alexander Pope (who had moved into the area in 1719 and built his eponymous villa at Twickenham).

The National Portrait Gallery version of the musical portrait

Kew Gardens

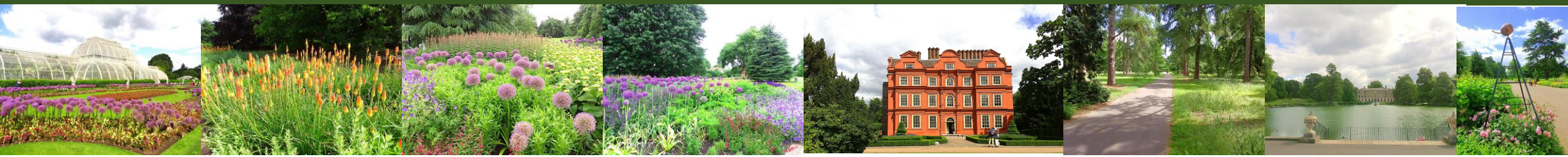
Augusta and George III

Kew Gardens

Frederick began remodelling the gardens associated with the White House, but "after staying all day in the garden till night, in the damp rain and hail to look at his workmen" in 1751 he caught a chill which – combined with a pulmonary embolism – proved fatal. His widow Augusta continued living at the White House with their children and remodelling the gardens. She was advised by her husband's friend John Stuart, 3rd Earl of Bute, and assisted by Sir William Chambers, one of the greatest masters of ornamental English gardening.

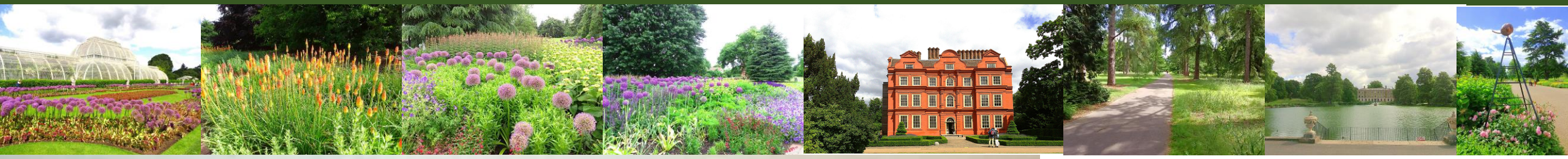
Frederick's sister Amelia was probably still in the Dutch House throughout the 1730s and 1740s, but seems to have moved out in 1751 when she was made ranger of Richmond Park, which came with a residence at White Lodge. This meant the Dutch House could become a schoolhouse for Augusta's two eldest sons, George (the future George III) and Edward, where they were taught by Bute and Chambers. In 1760 George took the throne, and a year later he married Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, moving into Richmond Lodge as his summer residence as his family grew – he and Charlotte had fifteen children between 1762 and 1783. Chambers built the Orangery and Great Pagoda at Kew for Augusta in 1761–62 but later in that decade she mainly lived at Carlton House. However, Augusta nominally retained the Dutch House and White House until her death in 1772, when they passed to George, who demolished Richmond Lodge and switched his summer residence to the White House. He also used the latter building to house some of his art collection, including a number of Canaletto's works and The Tribuna of the Uffizi by Zoffany, who lived nearby and is buried at St Anne's Church.

Kew Gardens



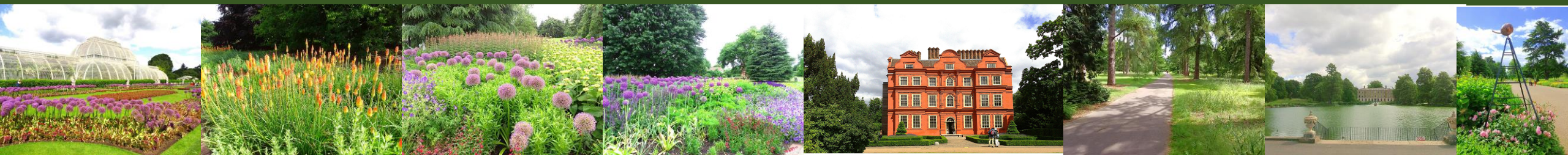
George continued the Dutch House's use as a schoolhouse, now for his two eldest sons George and Frederick. This led to it being known as 'the Prince of Wales's House' or 'the House Late the Prince of Wales's', though the future George IV never lived in it after his childhood. Small households of royal children were lodged in houses on Kew Green and the royal governess Lady Charlotte Finch also lived locally – in a watercolour of c. 1771–72 she is shown in the grounds of the Dutch House with some of the children. A map of 1771 delineated the land between the Dutch House and the river as still belonging to barrister Levett Blackborne, Lincoln's Inn barrister and grandson of Sir Richard Levett. This reflects the fact that the buildings and grounds were only leased by the royal family right up until 13 October 1781, when George III purchased the freehold from the Levetts for £20,000. Seven years later, George was kept in the White House during his first bout of 'madness' from November 1788 to March 1789, with his wife Charlotte and their daughters living on the upper floors and the Grooms of the Bedchamber in the Dutch House. The White House was then allowed to fall into disrepair, though it still proved possible to house him there during the second bout in 1801, whilst Charlotte and her daughters moved into the Dutch House to await news of George's recovery. The White House was finally demolished in 1802 and so on the onset of the third bout of 'madness' in 1804 George was housed in an upgraded single-storey service wing of the Dutch House and possibly also on the ground floor of the Dutch House, with Charlotte and the princesses on the Dutch House's first and second floors

Kew Gardens



Another reason for the demolition of the White House and the decreasing use of the Dutch House was the Castellated Palace, whose planning and design began around 1800. George's chosen architect was James Wyatt, whom he had taken on for works at Windsor Castle at around the same time. The building also became known as the New Palace or New Kew Palace and so the Dutch House was often known as the Old Palace or the Old Red House between 1800 and 1828.

Kew Gardens

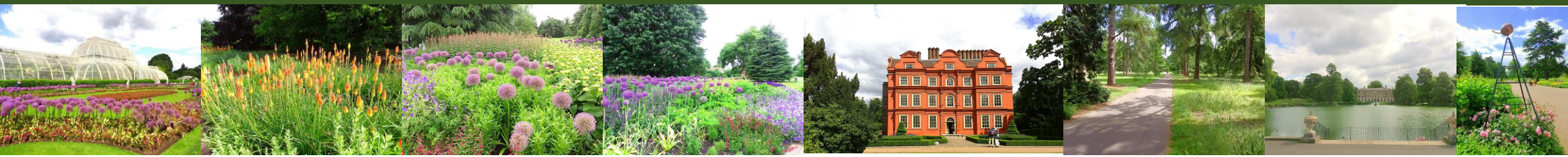


George created a site for the Castellated Palace by demolishing the old Queen's House and construction began around 1802. Known by some historians as "a late Georgian Nonsuch", it was in the neo-Gothic style. George was a late convert to this style – he wrote to his daughter Charlotte in 1803 stating:

I never thought I should have adopted Gothic instead of Grecian architecture, but the bad taste of the last forty years has so entirely corrupted the professors of the latter I have taken to the former from thinking Wyatt perfect in that style, of which my house will I trust be a good example.

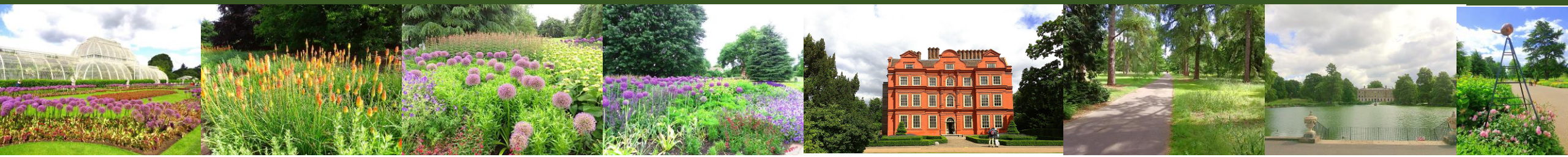
He had possibly been influenced by nearby Strawberry Hill House, by his earlier work on Windsor Castle and by his visits to Hartlebury Castle and Worcester Cathedral in 1788 and to Lulworth Castle and Sherborne Castle in 1789. Though Wyatt led the design, contributions were probably made by the king himself, who had been trained in architectural drawing as a boy at Kew by William Chambers. This royal involvement and interference may have contributed to repeated delays and overspend in construction thanks to his 1801 and 1804 illnesses.

Kew Gardens



The new palace was widely criticised – in his 1817 “A Morning's Walk from London to Kew", Sir Richard Phillips nicknamed it "the Bastile palace, from its resemblance to that building, so obnoxious to freedom and freemen."

Kew Gardens



This fourth and final bout of 'madness' also meant that work on the Castellated Palace ceased for good, leaving only a mostly roofed shell. This bout lasted ten years, all of which time he was confined at Windsor rather than Kew. In 1818, Queen Charlotte set out from London to Windsor to see the king and to attend the double wedding of her sons William and Edward. En route she decided to spend a few days at the Dutch House, but since she was ill with dropsy she was unable to continue her journey and so the weddings took place in the drawing room there on 11 July 1818. Later that year, on 17 November, Charlotte died in her bedroom on the first floor of the building.

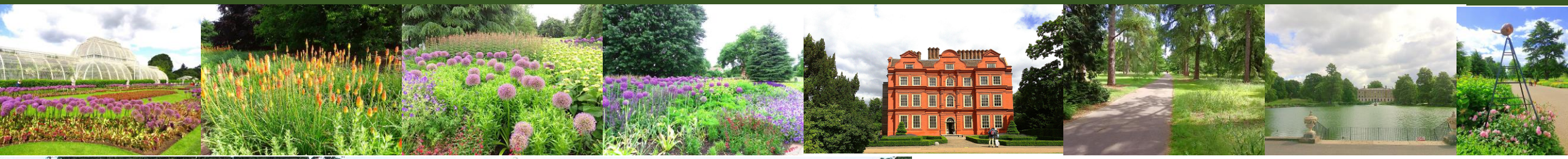
George died at Windsor in 1820 and his eldest son and successor George IV decided to demolish the Castellated Palace.
George IV also planned to demolish the Dutch House, but this did not come to fruition. Possibly influenced by having been married there in 1818, his brother William IV commissioned plans for adding a west wing to it and bringing it back into use, but this too did not come about.

Kew Gardens

Kew Gardens

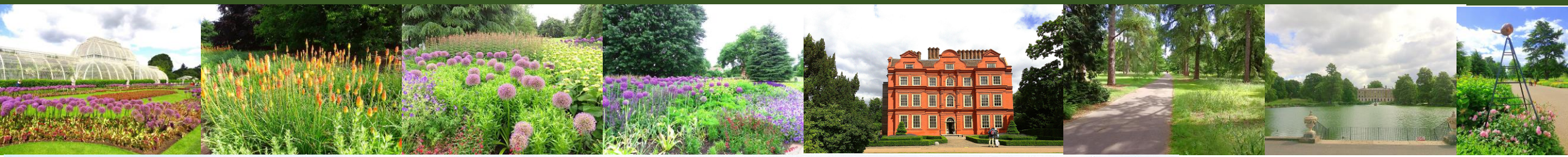
Kew Gardens

Kew Gardens



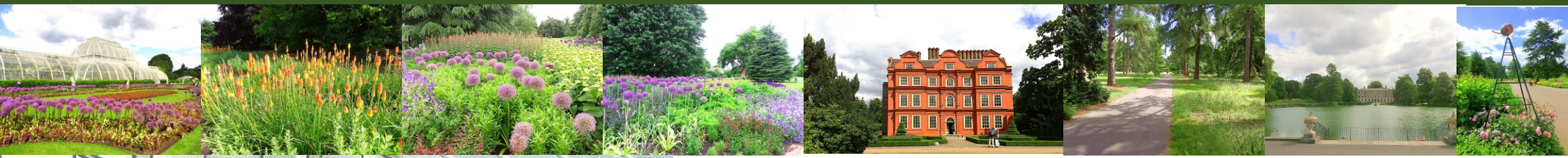
The Shirley Sherwood Gallery of Botanic Art opened in April 2008, and holds paintings from Kew's and Dr Shirley Sherwood's collections, many of which had never been displayed to the public before. It features paintings by artists such as Georg D. Ehret, the Bauer brothers, Pierre-Joseph Redouté and Walter Hood Fitch. The paintings and drawings are cycled on a six-monthly basis. The gallery is linked to the Marianne North Gallery

Kew Gardens



The Marianne North Gallery was built in the 1880s to house the paintings of Marianne North, an MP's daughter who travelled alone to North and South America, South Africa, and many parts of Asia, at a time when women rarely did so, to paint plants.
The gallery has 832 of her paintings.

Kew Gardens



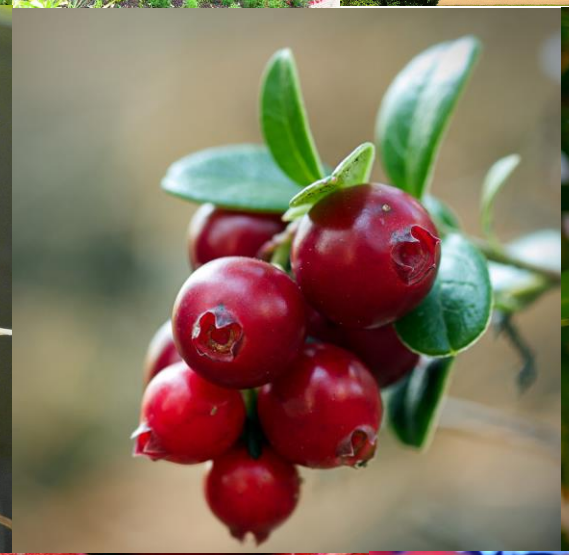
The living plant collections include the Alpine and Rock Garden, Aquatic, Arboretum, Arid, Aroid, Bonsai, Bromeliad, Carnivorous Plant, Cycad, Fern, Grass, Island Flora, Mediterranean Garden, Orchid, Palm, Temperate Herbaceous, Tender Temperate, Tropical Herbaceous, and Tropical Woody and Climbers Collections.

The Aquatic Garden is near the Jodrell laboratory. The Aquatic Garden, which celebrated its centenary in 2009, provides conditions for aquatic and marginal plants. The large central pool holds a selection of summer-flowering water lilies and the corner pools contain plants such as reed mace, bulrushes, Phragmites and smaller floating aquatic species.

Kew Gardens

The Orchid Collection is housed in two climate zones within the Princess of Wales Conservatory. To maintain an interesting display the plants are changed regularly so that those on view are generally flowering. The Rock Garden, originally built of limestone in 1882, is now constructed of Sussex sandstone from West Hoathly, Sussex. The rock garden is divided into six geographic regions: Europe, Mediterranean and Africa, Australia and New Zealand, Asia, North America, and South America. There are currently 2,480 different "accessions" growing in the garden.

Kew Gardens



Kew Gardens

Kew Gardens